

From: Jon Epstein <epstein@ecohealthalliance.org>
To: Jim Desmond <desmond@ecohealthalliance.org>
CC: Brian Bird <bhbird@ucdavis.edu>; Eddy Rubin <erubin@metabiota.com>; Jonna Mazet <jkmazet@ucdavis.edu>; PREDICT-outbreak <predict-outbreak@ucdavis.edu>; Damien Joly <djoly@metabiota.com>; Karen Saylor <ksaylor@metabiota.com>; William B. Karesh <karesh@ecohealthalliance.org>
Sent: 4/27/2017 8:08:33 AM
Subject: Re: death clusters in Liberia

Thank you Jim - very helpful!

-Jon

On Thu, Apr 27, 2017 at 8:11 AM, Jim Desmond <desmond@ecohealthalliance.org> wrote:
Hi All,

More details on the deaths in Sinoe from the meeting this morning.

18 cases; 10 deaths; All EBV negative

Clinical Signs:

non-febrile illness*

Severe headache

weakness

vomiting

diarrhea

severe abdominal pain

skin irritation in some patients

*one of the initial patients had fever but was found to be positive for malaria.

Timeline:

April 21- A wake was held where some snacks and drinks were provided

April 22 - Funeral followed by burial followed by a meal/repassé.

April 23 - First cases presented to the local hospital. Between 7pm and 2am (April 24) 6 patients died at the local hospital. County health teams alerted.

Demographics: 14 cases - Aged 11-24
4 cases - >50 years

- Samples currently being cultured at NRL/LIBR lab for bacterial pathogens
- The MOH is trying to identify a lab outside Liberia for toxicology
- Teams dispatched to Sinoe are currently investigating. Much of the discussion has been focussed on the meal provided following the funeral/burial and tracing who prepared and provided the food served. Based on the culture surrounding funeral ceremonies here, it's likely that many different people prepared and provided food for the meal.

I'll continue to provide updates as I hear more. Let me know you have any questions.

Regards,

Jim

James S. Desmond, DVM, MS
Field Veterinarian
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On April 26, 2017 at 7:01:03 PM, Jim Desmond (desmond@ecohealthalliance.org) wrote:

Hi Guys,

I'll be attending an emergency meeting tomorrow morning regarding the cases and give you an update. I've spoken with a couple of people who were at the meeting this morning and I was getting conflicting reports as to whether any of the patients were febrile. They are planning to culture for GI pathogens at the LIBR/NRL lab and there is a county rapid response team there now. Another team from Monrovia that includes CDC and WHO personnel went down there today. I'll know more tomorrow and will keep you guys informed.

Regards,

Jim

James S. Desmond, DVM, MS
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On April 26, 2017 at 6:43:39 PM, Jon Epstein (epstein@ecohealthalliance.org) wrote:

Agree - the GI involvement and a communal meal could point to a foodborne pathogen. Glad they were able to rule out Ebola.
-Jon

On Wed, Apr 26, 2017 at 2:33 PM, Brian Bird <bhbird@ucdavis.edu> wrote:

Thanks Jon. It's definitely an interesting cluster of cases if the history in the report is correct.

-b

From: Jon Epstein <epstein@ecohealthalliance.org>
Date: Wednesday, April 26, 2017 at 11:31 AM
To: Brian Bird <bhbird@ucdavis.edu>
Cc: Jim Desmond <desmond@ecohealthalliance.org>, Karen Saylors <ksaylors@metabiota.com>, Eddy Rubin <erubin@metabiota.com>, PREDICT-outbreak <predict-outbreak@ucdavis.edu>, Jonna Mazet <jkmazet@ucdavis.edu>, Damien Joly <djoly@metabiota.com>
Subject: Re: FW: death clusters in Liberia

Thanks Karen and Brian,

Damien had also asked about this. We don't have any additional information yet. Jim is anticipating that it will be discussed this Friday at the regular EOC meeting.

We'll update once we know more.

Cheers,

Jon

On Wed, Apr 26, 2017 at 2:19 PM, Brian Bird <bhbird@ucdavis.edu> wrote:

Thanks Karen for forwarding this. I've cc'd the "outbreak" email for broader situational awareness.

Jim or Jon, if you have any updates or more information that would be most appreciated. Perhaps this was/will be discussed at the Friday EOC joint (emergency partners) meetings or some other taskforce meeting?

Thanks,

-Brian

From: Karen Saylor <ksaylors@metabiota.com>

Date: Wednesday, April 26, 2017 at 10:58 AM

To: Jon Epstein <epstein@conservationmedicine.org>, Jim and Jenny Desmond <desmond@ecohealthalliance.org>

Cc: Brian Bird <bhbird@ucdavis.edu>

Subject: death clusters in Liberia

Hi there.

Just saw this and wanted to see whether you have any news?

Looks like Ebola has been ruled out: (<http://in.reuters.com/article/us-health-liberia-idINKBN17S22R>) so that is good, but yikes!

Hope you and the team are okay!

Best,

Karen

Karen Saylor, Ph.D.

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EcoHealth Alliance leads cutting-edge research into the critical connections between human and wildlife health and delicate ecosystems. With this science we develop solutions that promote conservation and prevent pandemics.

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